

Over 350 Spanish artists denounce Israel's genocidal attack on Gaza

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Over 350 actors, filmmakers, singers and other cultural figures have signed the “Manifesto of Spanish Artists against the Massacre in Gaza and the Inaction in the Face of Apartheid and Genocide in Palestine,” calling for an “immediate” opening of humanitarian corridors in Gaza, while criticizing the acting Socialist Party (PSOE)-Podemos government’s “inaction” in the face of the Israeli genocide in Gaza.

The manifesto is a part the growing opposition of artists and cultural workers to the assault on the defenceless Palestinian population. Events in Gaza are radicalising millions throughout the world, a process that found vivid expression in the one-million strong protest in London and the demonstrations by hundreds of thousands across the world over the past weekend.

In the US, 8,000 American artists, writers and other cultural workers signed the forthright declaration that “We support Palestinian liberation and call for an end to the killing and harming of all civilians, an immediate ceasefire, the passage of humanitarian aid into Gaza, and the end of the complicity of our governing bodies in grave human rights violations and war crimes.”

Since then, “Artists Call for Ceasefire Now,” a group of prominent American actors, writers and musicians, addressed an open letter to President Joe Biden and the US Congress calling “for an immediate de-escalation and ceasefire in Gaza and Israel before another life is lost.”

In the UK, over 2,000 filmmakers, actors, visual artists, playwrights, musicians, photographers, poets, authors, comedians, producers, curators, DJs, architects and designers signed an open letter asserting that “Our governments are not only tolerating war crimes but aiding and abetting them.”

The manifesto signed by Spanish artists begins by condemning “the deaths of Israeli civilians by the Hamas operation” on October 7, while demanding an end to the “the indiscriminate destruction that the Israeli army is

once again carrying out” in Gaza, a crime that has so far killed 11,000 Palestinians to date, half of them children, and maimed tens of thousands for life.

The manifesto continues by remembering the escalating attacks by the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) and Israeli settlers in the West Bank, run by the US-Israeli puppet, the Palestinian Authority, where over 150 Palestinian have died since October 7, and over 2,150 have been detained.

“We call for an end to attacks by heavily armed settlers who harass, attack and shoot at the Palestinian population in the occupied territories of the West Bank,” it continues. “We denounce the murders that, although common in recent years, have alarmingly escalated in recent months in the face of the defenseless Palestinian civilians.”

The manifesto then cites the violations of Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” This is being carried out “with the consented impunity of the international community.”

It lists the violations, including the “detention and attack on medical teams, as well as the bombing of health centers and hospitals”; “indiscriminate airstrikes against the civilian population of the Gaza Strip ... with the excuse of generating a defense against Hamas”; and the “destruction and appropriation of property.”

The manifesto references the 16-year Israeli siege of Gaza, explaining that “Israel has been blocking the Gaza Strip by land, sea and air since 2007, preventing access to food, medicine, reconstruction materials, and basic necessities such as water and electricity to more than two million people who survive in the fringe. This punishment has also been announced by members of the current Israeli government.” It condemns the annexation ambitions of the far-right Netanyahu regime as “inadmissible.”

It then lists abuses of the occupying Israeli regime, which includes the detention and torture of 5,000 Palestinians, the murder of children, extortion of prisoners to collaborate with the Israeli intelligence services, the killing of media personnel in Gaza and the detention of journalists.

The manifesto asserts that the “list of Human Rights violations by Israel is endless, without forgetting that Israel was created by the United Nations, which led to the displacement of almost 800,000 people. Ironically, Israel is the state that least respects the resolutions of its creator, the United Nations, and continues with its systematic violation of Universal Human Rights with impunity.”

It makes references to history: “The history of humanity has many dark chapters, and Palestine is one of them. If the world had raised its voice against Nazi Germany, against Apartheid in South Africa ... we would have saved millions of human lives, so now more than ever it is essential that we stand up to the Apartheid State of Israel.”

The artists’ statement then appeals to the PSOE-Podemos government, which has actively sided with Israel. Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has promoted Israel’s “right to self-defence,” a fraudulent pretext for mass slaughter and ethnic cleansing. “This is why we ask the Government of Spain to take a strong position, there is no room for neutrality or equidistance here.”

The hundreds of manifesto signatories include well-known Spanish artists, among them actresses Marisa Paredes, Itziar Castro and Emma Suárez, actor and director Juan Diego Botto, film director Montxo Armendáriz and singers Ismael Serrano, Ramoncín, Coque Malla and Rozalén, writer Luis Landero and poet and composer of Palestinian descent Marwán.

Significantly absent are some of the most prominent Spanish cinema figures, including actors Javier Bardem, Penelope Cruz, Eduardo Noriega and director Pedro Almodovar. In 2014, they were victims of a vicious campaign by the US and Israeli media accusing them of antisemitism after they denounced the IDF slaughter that killed 2,300 Palestinians in Gaza, half of them children.

These artists, with a long track record of denouncing the US-led imperialist wars in Iraq, fascism and the crimes of the dictatorship of General Francisco Franco (1936-1978), signed a letter, entitled “Statement of Culture against the Palestinian Genocide,” deeming Israel’s murderous operation in Gaza as “genocide.”

Bardem also published his own thoughts in *El Diario*, arguing: “I cannot understand this barbarism, even more

brutal and incomprehensible considering all of the horrible things the Jewish people have gone through in the past.”

Bardem was forced to release a statement afterwards, clarifying that “While I was critical of the Israeli military response, I have great respect for the people of Israel and deep compassion for their losses,” the actor wrote. “I am now being labeled by some as anti-Semitic, as is my wife—which is the antithesis of who we are as human beings. We detest anti-Semitism as much as we detest the horrible and painful consequences of war.”

The current manifesto is an important development. The WSWS encourages every act of opposition to the mass murder in Gaza, its supporters in the PSOE-Podemos government and its apologists in the media. We warn, however, that it is not a matter of appealing to the PSOE-Podemos government, the European Union or the US. Indeed, the wars prosecuted by the US and European governments have led to millions of dead and tens of millions of displaced in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Somalia, Yemen, Mali and beyond. Now, the same governments are actively supporting the far-right Netanyahu regime.

As Saturday’s WSWS perspective states, “It is not a matter of appealing to the capitalist governments responsible for these crimes to alter course but rather turning to the working class, fusing the struggle against war with the developing struggles of workers all over the world against inequality and exploitation. This includes strike action to stop the shipment of weapons to Israel and the development of a movement for a political general strike to demand an end to the slaughter in Gaza.”

This opposition is already developing, with industrial action by workers to cut off military support for Israel in the United States, Turkey, Belgium, Spain and beyond.



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